

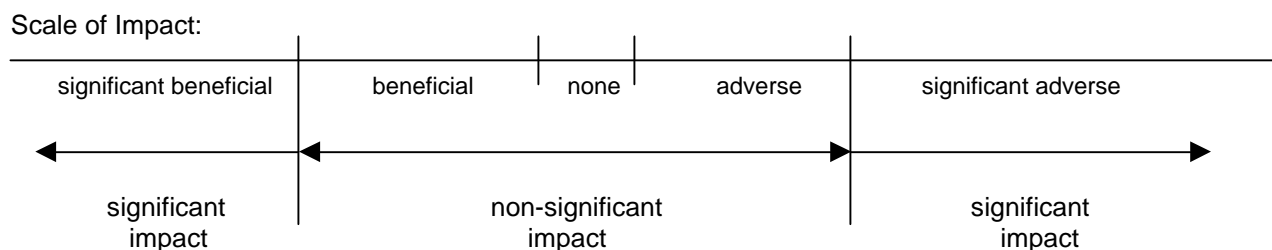
Chapter 7: Findings and Conclusion

After examining the affected environment and considering the environmental impacts of seven alternative strategies for adjacent landowner activities guidelines, the preferred alternative is the Narrow Shoreline Variance, Alternative 7.

If the impacts of this alternative for adjacent landowner activity guidelines are considered significant, as defined in the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1508.27), an Environmental Impact Statement is required. If the analysis concludes that any impacts associated with a preferred alternative would not be significant, then a finding of no significant impact can be issued.

There is a continuum of potential beneficial or adverse impacts from an action for any given resource. As suggested in Figure 7-1, there may be no impact on a specific resource, perhaps because there is no incremental impact from the action (for example the action will have no impact on a resource like ground water). Perhaps when the incremental impact from the project is added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future impacts, the total impact is within natural variation of that resource, and therefore no significant impacts would be forecast. Perhaps a small beneficial or adverse impact might occur, but the level of effect would be small enough that the resource affected has ample capacity to absorb the effect, or the total impact does not a regulatory threshold (e.g. a water quality standard). Finally, an impact may be large enough that a significance threshold is crossed.

Figure 7-1. Distinguishing between significant and non-significant impacts.



The Council on Environmental Quality regulations require that an action be analyzed in terms of “context” and “intensity” (40 CFR 1508.27). The action must be considered in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests and the locality. For this action, considering new allowable adjacent landowner activities guidelines, there is no effect on society as a whole. The affected region, north central Texas, is experiencing rapid growth and development and there is continuing pressure on lands surrounding Grapevine and Lewisville Lakes from the ever increasing private developments adjacent to Federal lands. Likewise, Grapevine and Lewisville Lakes were constructed in ecoregions known as the Blackland Prairies and the Cross Timbers, both considered to be highly valuable and rapidly disappearing habitat types in region. Finally, the affected interests and locality in our context the adjacent landowners that live part or full time on these properties, currently number in the range of a few hundred families, but based on the number of private parcels of land that adjoin Grapevine and Lewisville Lakes, may soon exceed one thousand. Parcels that are currently not developed, will almost assuredly be developed sometime in the future, and pressure from adjacent landowners to mow and underbrush and develop access paths will continue. As the CEQ regulations state, in the case of site-specific actions, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole.

Intensity refers to the severity of impact, and CEQ provides 10 intensity issues to consider for significance determination. Table 7-1 lists these issues, and summarizes the factors analyzed, the facts found and the connections between those facts and the finding of no significant impact.

Table 7-1. Significance determination for the Narrow Shoreline Variance Alternative (preferred alternative)

Consideration			Effect	Significance Threshold	Exceeded
Environmental Impacts	Mowing/Underbrushing		See Tables 4-3 through 4-14	substantial habitat quality lost, water quality standard exceeded, adjacent landowners denied access to shore	No
	Habitat Management		See Table 4-3 through 4-14	substantial habitat quality lost, water quality standard exceeded, adjacent landowners denied access to shore	No
	Access Paths		See Table 4-15	substantial habitat quality lost, water quality standard exceeded, adjacent landowners denied access to shore	No
Public Health & Human Safety	Mow & Underbrush	Decrease	more encounters with rodents and snakes; increase of fire (or the perception of an increase) due to increased grass and underbrush	more than 1% of population has public health and safety compromised	No
		Increase	no effect on health and public safety		
	Habitat Management	Restoration of Native Veg.	no effect on health and public safety		
		Control of Undesirable Veg.	if not controlled, more poison ivy could increase incidents of reactions; if controlled with herbicides, increased risk of water contamination	contaminate drinking water supply above regulatory standards	No
		Establishment of Buffer Zone	protect water quality	contaminate drinking water supply above regulatory standards	No
	Access Paths	Change in Number	no effect on health and public safety		
Unique Characteristics of area	Adjacent landowner activities guidelines.		Study area is within an ecosystem known as the Blackland Prairie and Cross Timbers, both rapidly disappearing and considered highly valuable by Texas Parks & Wildlife as extremely valuable	substantial habitat quality lost	No
Controversial Effects on Human Environment	Mow & Underbrush		little or no scientific controversy on the effects of mowing and underbrushing.	other resource agencies or scientific groups dispute the size, nature or effect of mowing and underbrushing	No
	Habitat Management		some scientific controversy on the ability to effectively manage ecosystems without introducing unexpected consequences.	other resource agencies or scientific groups dispute the size, nature or effect of habitat management prescriptions	No
	Access Paths		little or no scientific controversy on the effect of paths to shorelines	other resource agencies or scientific groups dispute the size, nature or effect of shoreline management prescriptions	No
Uncertain Effects on Human Environment	Mow & Underbrush		little or no uncertainty of the effects of mowing and underbrushing	other resource agencies or scientific groups offer evidence that is substantially different than presented	No
	Habitat Management	Restoration of Native Veg.	some uncertainty of the unintended consequences of habitat management	other resource agencies or scientific groups offer evidence that management prescriptions are incorrect	No
		Control of Undesirable Veg.	amount of herbicides applied unknown	other resource agencies or scientific groups offer evidence that is substantially different than presented	No
		Establishment of Buffer Zone	little or no uncertainty of the effects of buffer zones	other resource agencies or scientific groups offer evidence that is substantially different than presented	No
	Access Paths		little or no uncertainty of the effects of access paths	other resource agencies or scientific groups offer evidence that is substantially different than presented	No

Table 7-1. Significance determination for the Preferred Alternative (continued)

Consideration			Effect	Significance Threshold	Exceeded
Precedents for Future Actions with Significant Affects	Mow & Underbrush	Increase	More area in high disturbance	substantially more area mowed	No
	Habitat Management	Restoration of Native Veg.	does not set a precedent		
		Control of Undesirable Veg.	herbicide use on Federal lands	contaminate drinking water supply above regulatory standards	No
	Access Paths	Change in Number	adjacent landowner access to shoreline	quality public outdoor recreation experiences for present and future generations and long term public access to public lands denied	No
Cumulative Effects	Habitat quality		see Table 6.2	see Table 6.1	No
	Water quality		see Table 6.2	see Table 6.1	No
	Human Community (access paths)		see Table 6.2	see Table 6.1	No
Adverse Effects on Cultural Resources			no cultural resources in study area would be affected by mowing/ underbrushing, habitat management, or access paths		No
Endangered or Threatened Species			no endangered or threatened species occur in study area		No